ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system and method for controlling, by an outside entity, one or more devices associated with a location. A representative embodiment of the system architecture comprises an internal computer system through which a device may be

5   remotely controlled by the outside entity during a communication session between the outside entity and the internal computer system through an external computer network. The external computer network can be the Internet. When the outside entity is requested to control the device, the outside entity's identity information is authenticated before the communication session is established. In a preferred

10   embodiment, the internal computer system is protected by a firewall. The firewall allows the outside entity to access the internal computer system to control the device if the outside entity can provide proper identity information. The identity information of the outside entity may be a password that is recognized by the firewall. In the preferred embodiment, the identity information is a digital

15   certificate issued to the outside entity by a certificate authority. In preferred embodiments, after the communication session is established, only the outside entity can terminate the communication session.

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